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Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

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Sixtieth year

Identical letters dated 29 August 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 25 and 26 July 2005. The theme of the meeting was "United Nations-regional organizations: partnership for a more secure world". Twenty delegations from regional, subregional and other intergovernmental organizations, thirteen at the level of head of organization, took part in the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the findings of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and my report entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005) and in particular, the recommendations related to regional organizations. The participants agreed that the relationship between the United Nations and the regional and other intergovernmental organizations should be significantly strengthened. They also agreed that the results of the meeting should be conveyed to the High-level Plenary Meeting that will be held from 14 to 16 September in New York.

In that connection, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the conclusions of the meeting, which reflect my understanding, as Chairman, of the various proposals and comments (see annex I). I also attach the text of my opening remarks (see annex II). I shall keep you informed of further progress made by the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations in this increasingly important field.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

* A/60/150.

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Annex I

[Original: English]

Conclusions of the Chairman of the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations

25 and 26 July 2005

1. The sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations was held on 25 and 26 July 2005 at United Nations Headquarters. Twenty organizations participated in the meeting, of which 13 were represented at the level of head of organization. A list of participating organizations is included in paragraph 11.

2. In his opening statement the Secretary-General noted that the meeting was being held at a unique moment for the international community. There was a crisis of confidence in the ability of multilateral institutions to meet the challenges of our times. Yet moments of crisis carried the seeds of opportunity, and it was necessary now to reinvigorate the multilateral system through the adoption of far-reaching reform measures such as those proposed in recent reports to be discussed at the sixtieth anniversary session of the General Assembly (namely, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565) and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "In larger freedom" (A/59/2005). The relationship of the United Nations with regional and other intergovernmental organizations was a critical part of this effort. He called for a common vision of a global architecture of peace and security with interlocking capacities based on the comparative advantages of the global and regional institutions.

3. Participants condemned the spate of terrorist bombings of recent months, which had shaken the peoples of the world. Never before had the security of the individual citizen and the security of the global community been so starkly and closely connected. It was, in their view, clear that the human security of all citizens of the planet and the State security of members of both the United Nations and regional and other participating organizations depended on combating terrorism while also respecting civil liberties and addressing the root causes of conflict and terrorism. Structural prevention needed also to be complemented by effective operational prevention, based on effective regional-global cooperation in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. To that end, the systemic weaknesses of the global system, such as absolute poverty, natural resource depletion and environmental degradation, health pandemics and the social ills of crime and corruption needed to be seriously addressed as issues of international peace and security.

4. Participants recalled the challenge articulated by the Secretary-General at the fifth high-level meeting to develop a regional-global mechanism of peace and security. They expressed satisfaction at the work done in the two years since then on strengthening the United Nations-regional organizations partnership. In this respect they endorsed the proposals, with modifications agreed upon at the meeting, put forward by the six working groups that had been established in the areas of peacekeeping, civilian protection, respect for human rights in counter-terrorism,

dialogue among civilizations, disarmament and the implications of United Nations reform for the partnership. They supported the further development of organizational capacities in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding at both the regional and subregional levels. In this respect they supported in particular the proposed 10-year capacity-building plan for the African Union. Future meetings would include special attention to African needs.

5. In the light of the trauma experienced by peoples of so many regions of the world in the wake of the Asian tsunami and other recent natural disasters, participants agreed to include disaster relief and disaster risk-reduction on their agenda for future cooperation.

6. It was recognized that a need existed for a more structured relationship between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations if a genuine complementarity based on their comparative advantages was to be realized. Participants endorsed the intention of the Secretary-General to conclude agreements of appropriate kinds with individual organizations.

7. Participants also agreed upon the following measures:

- To convene on an annual basis to monitor developments in international security and promote the goals of the United Nations
- To ensure that their high-level meetings coincide with the meetings held by the Security Council with regional organizations for better efficiency of participation and for substantive complementarity of agendas
- To establish a standing committee that would act, under terms of reference agreed upon by all participating organizations, as an initiator of ideas, a mobilizer of political will and sustainable direction and a monitor for ensuring the implementation of decisions made
- To identify one high-level official in each organization for the purpose of liaising with the United Nations and with one another
- To recognize that interested regional and subregional organizations will pursue joint activities under the umbrella of high-level meetings under Chapter VIII of the Charter while other intergovernmental organizations will partner with the United Nations under the other Charter provisions, in response to the distinction made by the High-level Panel to that effect
- To strengthen both the secretariat of the high-level meetings in the Department of Political Affairs and its research partner (Comparative Regional Integration Studies, United Nations University) in order to provide continuous assistance for the new standing committee and the working groups.

8. Participants supported the establishment of a Human Rights Council and a Peacebuilding Commission, while stressing the latter's role also in conflict prevention. They adopted a statement on a partnership among civilizations (see appendix).

9. Participants recalled with appreciation the conference immediately preceding the high-level meeting, organized by Max van der Stoel, on "quiet diplomacy" as a method of conflict prevention and resolution under Chapter VI of the Charter.

10. The detailed record of the sixth high-level meeting and the decisions reached on the results of each working group will be distributed to participants for comment and will thereafter form the basis of work in preparation for the seventh high-level meeting.

11. Participating regional and other intergovernmental organizations were as follows:

African Union

Caribbean Community Secretariat

Collective Security Treaty Organization

Commonwealth of Independent States

Commonwealth Secretariat

Community of Portuguese-speaking countries

Council of Europe

European Union; represented by the Presidency of the Council, the Council Secretariat and the Commission

Economic Community of Central African States

International Criminal Police Organization

International Organization of la Francophonie

League of Arab States

North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Organization of American States

Organization of the Islamic Conference

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Pacific Islands Forum

Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Southern African Development Community

Appendix

Statement on a partnership among civilizations

1. The participants in the sixth high-level meeting between the Secretary-General and the heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations commend the dialogue among civilizations, launched in 1998 by the United Nations. The dialogue was born of the existence of two different perceptions of diversity: diversity as a threat or diversity as an instrument for betterment and growth. The need still exists to overcome divisiveness deriving from prejudice, intolerance, misconceptions, enmity and lack of knowledge. The dialogue thus continues to require institutional support.

2. To foster this, we agree that it is necessary to proceed towards a partnership among civilizations, involving all stakeholders — Governments, intergovernmental organizations and civil society. This partnership will represent a powerful response to those who feed on exclusion and arrogantly claim the sole ownership of truth. Indeed, a new "narrative" is called for at a time when old paradigms of international relations are increasingly questioned. Forging common ground requires a global narrative based on our common spiritual and cultural insights.

3. We are determined to strengthen the global agenda-setting role of the majority of humankind. A global agenda intrinsically embraces us all. Thus, a partnership among civilizations is possible. Our increasingly interdependent societies and our common identity as individuals should foster this.

4. We also believe that advocacy of a global civilization with all its diversity, including every citizen of the planet, is needed to pursue the partnership among civilizations project. We intend to establish a group of leading personalities from various sectors of society to play that advocacy role. Our organizations, including those of the United Nations system and transnational organizations, can play a leading role in this endeavour and institutionalize it by taking appropriate steps.

Annex II

[Original: English]

Statement of the Chairman at the opening of the sixth high-level meeting with regional and other intergovernmental organizations

I am pleased to welcome you to the United Nations for the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations.

We meet at a unique moment for the United Nations and the multilateral system. The events that have shaken the international community so profoundly in recent years have produced a crisis of confidence in the ability of our multilateral institutions to cope with the challenges of our time.

Yet moments of crisis carry seeds of opportunity — offering us the chance to react with a positive spirit, innovative mindset and decisive political will. In this way, we can open the door to action for much-needed renewal of our multilateral institutions.

In September, the world's leaders will meet here at the United Nations for what is expected to be one of the largest gatherings of heads of State and Government ever. As of today, 175 heads of State and Government have indicated that they will attend the summit. I believe we will have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address some of the most pressing challenges of our era.

It will be a test of our ability to act on the understanding that development, security and human rights are not only ends in themselves — they reinforce each other and depend on each other. That in our interconnected world, the human family will not enjoy security without development, will not enjoy development without security, and will enjoy neither without respect for human rights. And that to promote progress in all three, we also need to reinvigorate our multilateral institutions.

We have a solid foundation for doing this. Building on the far-reaching proposals of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the Millennium Project, I proposed to United Nations Member States an agenda for the September summit in my report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all".

Ongoing discussions, under the very able leadership of the President of the General Assembly, are building consensus over a range of issues — on financing for development, comprehensive national development strategies, health and environmental issues; on terrorism and non-proliferation; on post-conflict reconstruction, human rights and reform of the United Nations itself.

The United Nations relationship with regional organizations is a critical part of the discussion.

That is why this meeting is so timely. It gives us an opportunity to provide concerted input to the process.

Indeed, there are a number of interesting proposals on the table. The aim is clear: we need better-structured and more efficient channels of cooperation between

the United Nations and regional organizations. We need agreements between the United Nations and individual organizations to govern the sharing of information, expertise and resources. We need flexible interaction that recognizes the diversity of mandates and means of regional and other intergovernmental organizations and avoids a one-size-fits-all approach.

To that end, I intend to invite more regularly regional organizations to participate in meetings of United Nations coordinating bodies on issues of particular mutual interest. From now on, I also believe that we should implement what has been suggested before and hold a meeting like this every year. If possible, our annual meeting could be arranged so as to coincide with meetings between regional organizations and the Security Council.

As you know, a key point in my reform proposals is the creation of a Peacebuilding Commission, which could help ensure that peace agreements do not collapse and yield to renewed violence.

The Commission would bring together all relevant international and regional actors, from within and outside the United Nations system. It would afford the possibility for regional organizations to have a seat and a voice at the table during the critical rebuilding stage in countries emerging from conflict. It would allow for more cohesive results-oriented planning, taking into account valuable regional expertise and dividing up tasks on the basis of comparative advantage. We should discuss forms and options for your participation during our deliberations later today.

On international peacekeeping, the needs remain great. The demands of war-stricken countries often outstrip the United Nations capacity to deal with them. Moreover, other organizations may be better-suited to respond to certain situations. For example, the African Union is trailblazing a leadership role in Darfur.

We wholeheartedly welcome an overall increase in global peacekeeping capacities and strongly support their further development at the regional and subregional levels, including through the proposed 10-year capacity-building plan for the African Union.

Our challenge now is to articulate a common vision for a global architecture interlocking such capacities based on comparative advantages and clear divisions of labour. We must step up our dialogue on what that system should look like over the coming decades, of course always recognizing the central role of the Security Council in all this, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter.

Also on the agenda is the question of how to increase the participation of regional organizations in multi-pillar peace operations under the overall United Nations umbrella.

All these proposals will add value to the complementary roles which regional organizations can play as true partners of the United Nations in peace, security and beyond.

There are many areas in which we are cooperating and where we can improve our interaction to better results: strengthening democratic institutions, good governance and the rule of law; providing electoral assistance; promoting respect for human rights; responding to humanitarian emergencies, including natural disasters; dealing with terrorism, organized crime and corruption; and supporting the development efforts of weaker nations.

Let us spare no effort to work more closely and more efficiently together for the mutual benefit of our organizations and respective Member States and, above all, for the peoples of every region in the world.